

# **CONTINUING TRAINING**

## **Working with Fathers in Child Welfare**

### **Trainer's Guide**



Vetting Version | April 2022

# Acknowledgments

This curriculum was co-created in a collaborative environment with multiple instructors, CDSS, CalSWEC, and Northern Academy. These contributors include: Kelly Beck, Joey Cordero, Alana Dussell, Shay O'Brien, and Javi Perez, among others. The materials were also vetted by a diverse group of stakeholders across the state, including fathers with lived experience in the child welfare system.

## **More about Kelly Beck:**

Kelly Lynn Beck is an Attorney and Trainer with the National Institute for Permanent Family Connectedness at Seneca Family of Agencies. She is also a Consultant for the Northern CA Training Academy/UC Davis as well as a Court Appointed Counsel for parents and children in dependency actions. She is the author of several articles, including "Maintaining Family Relationships for Children in the Child Welfare System," (ABA); "How Reasonable Efforts' Leads to Emotional and Legal Permanence," (Capital University Law Review) and "Unlocking Reasonable Efforts: Kinship is Key" (Shriver Institute)

Kelly travels nationally providing training and strategic planning sessions for judicial officers, attorneys, social workers, CASA, service providers, resource parents and many other dependency and delinquency court stakeholders. Her trainings and curriculum development topics include permanency related issues, such as: Family Finding and Engagement, Reasonable Efforts, Concurrent Planning, Adoption and Embracing Fathers and His Relatives.

Previously, Kelly was the Senior Program Manager with the Model Courts Project at the National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges; the lead Attorney for the Permanency Project at the California Judicial Council; a Title IV-E Judicial Review Juvenile Consultant and has 20+ years of private practice experience handling adoption and child custody matters.

## **More about Joey Cordero:**

After successfully reunifying with his daughter through the Child Welfare system in 2009, Mr. Cordero really felt inspired to help other fathers through this process. This opportunity came in many different ways. He started sharing his experience at Child Welfare events; mass, focus groups, unit meetings and digital storytelling projects. This led Mr. Cordero to start one of the first fatherhood groups in San Francisco as well as chairing the San Francisco Fatherhood Initiative Workgroup for over a decade. While working as a Parent Partner and Family Case Manager, he was invited to develop curriculum and train service providers on Fatherhood Engagement. Today, Mr. Cordero is continuing to do this important work with his own business; Cordero Parenting Consulting Group. He continues to contract with the state bar as a Court appointed Family Engagement Specialist (CAFES) and consults, trains and presents both locally and nationally.

The curriculum is developed with public funds and is intended for public use. For information on use and citation of the curriculum, please refer to: [The CalSWEC Citation Guidelines](https://calswec.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/citation_guideline_6-2018.pdf), URL: [https://calswec.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/citation\\_guideline\\_6-2018.pdf](https://calswec.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/citation_guideline_6-2018.pdf).



For questions about California's Continuing Training Curricula, please visit the [California Social Work Education Center \(CalSWEC\) website](http://calswec.berkeley.edu/)  
URL: <http://calswec.berkeley.edu/>.

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# Introduction

*Please read carefully as a first step in preparing to train this curriculum.*

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Fatherhood engagement is an Integrated Core Practice Model (ICPM) behavior that should be valued and demonstrated by staff of all levels, including internal and external stakeholders. This curriculum is intended to be foundational in nature while ensuring the voice of the father and paternal relatives are included in the child welfare system. Whenever possible, it is ideal to have a father with lived experience be embedded in the delivery of this curriculum (either by co-delivering this training, or as the qualified trainer of this curriculum). You will notice instructions for this co-training role throughout this guide.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

In preparation for training this course, trainers must first carefully watch the Training 4 Training (T4T) eLearning. Then, review the Agenda and Lesson Plan. After this overview, trainers can proceed to review the activities for each training segment in the Trainer's Guide and the training content in the Trainee's Guide to become thoroughly familiar with each topic and the training activities. The components of the Trainer's and Trainee's Guides are described under the subheadings listed below.

These materials are developed with public funds and intended for public use. For information on use and citation of the curricula, please refer to the [Guidelines for Citation](#):

[https://calswec.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/citation\\_guideline\\_6-2018.pdf](https://calswec.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/citation_guideline_6-2018.pdf).

## EVALUATION

The purpose of the evaluations is multidimensional and is designed to: (1) provide evaluative feedback regarding the curriculum design and its effectiveness to (a) help inform workforce development needs, (b) understand how to best to support trainee learning, and (c) foster a deeper level of learning for future trainees; (2) explore knowledge acquisition at the aggregate level; and (3) establish a standard method of evaluating training effectiveness in response to federal requirements in the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) for California.

In order to receive course completion status, trainees will complete all evaluations which will fulfill and maximize the programmatic learning goals and learning objectives outlined for this curriculum. Individual trainee responses to evaluations will (1) be anonymous, (2) be stored and analyzed by the California Social Work Education Center at University of California, Berkeley, and (3) will only be reported as part of a group of at least 11. **All evaluations will be completed through [the California Child Welfare Training \(CACWT\) system website](#), which is hosted at the following URL: <https://cacwt.dss.ca.gov>. Please make sure you know your username and password before the training begins, so that you can access and complete your evaluations during the training.**

# COMPONENTS OF THE TRAINER’S AND TRAINEE’S GUIDES

## Learning Objectives

The Learning Objectives serve as the basis for the training content that is provided to both the trainer and trainees. All the Learning Objectives for the curriculum are listed in both the Trainer’s and Trainee’s Guides. The Learning Objectives are subdivided into three categories: Knowledge, Skills, and Values. They are numbered in series beginning with K1 for knowledge, S1 for skills, and V1 for values. The Learning Objectives are also indicated in the Lesson Plan for each segment of the curriculum.

*Knowledge Learning Objectives* entail the acquisition of new information and often require the ability to recognize or recall that information. *Skill Learning Objectives* involve the application of knowledge and frequently require the demonstration of such application. *Values Learning Objectives* describe attitudes, ethics, and desired goals and outcomes for practice. Generally, *Values Learning Objectives* do not easily lend themselves to measurement, although values acquisition may sometimes be inferred through other responses elicited during the training process.

## Agenda

The Agenda is a simple, sequential outline indicating the order of events in the training day, including the coverage of broad topic areas, evaluations, training activities, lunch, and break times. The Agenda for trainers differs slightly from the Agenda provided to trainees in that the trainer’s agenda indicates duration; duration is not indicated on the agenda for trainees.

## Lesson Plan

The Lesson Plan in the Trainer’s Guide is a map of the structure and flow of the training. It presents each topic in order and indicates the duration of training time for each topic.

The Lesson Plan contains two column headings: “Segment,” and “Methodology and Learning Objectives.” The “Segment” column is divided into training segments, and indicates the duration, approximate start and end times, and the topic(s) of each segment. The “Methodology and Learning Objectives” column indicates the training activities that accompany each segment. As applicable, each activity is numbered sequentially within a segment, with activities for Segment 1 beginning with Activity 1A, Segment 2 beginning with Activity 2A, etc. The “Methodology and Learning Objectives” column also reflects the specific objectives that are covered in each segment, as well as the associated PowerPoint slides.

## Training Content

The training content in the Trainee Guide contains the standardized text of the curriculum and provides the basis for evaluation. Training activities are labeled to match the titles in the Lesson Plan.

## Optional Handouts

Optional Handouts are clearly titled and appear in both the Trainer’s and Trainee’s Guides. Optional Handouts refer to additional handouts not included in the training content of the Trainee’s Guide. For example, Optional Handouts include PowerPoint slide printouts or further information on a training topic. For this course, all required documents are included in the Trainee Guide.

## References and Bibliography

The Trainer’s Guide and Trainee’s Guide each contain the same References and Bibliography. The References and Bibliography section indicates the sources that were reviewed by the curriculum designer(s) to prepare and to write the content information, training tips, training activities, and any other information conveyed in the training materials. It also includes additional resources that apply to a particular content area.

## Materials Checklist

The Materials Checklist provides a complete listing of all the materials needed for the entire training. Multimedia materials include such items as videos, audio recordings, posters, and other audiovisual aids. Materials specific to each individual training activity are also noted in the training tips and activities section of the Trainer’s Guide.

# Preparing to Train this Curriculum

Note for April Reviewers: The T4T module for this curriculum is still in development. The key topics from that module will be reflected here. Instructions for how to complete the T4T will also be here.

# Evaluation

All evaluation materials for trainers and trainees should be accessed through [the California Child Welfare Training \(CACWT\) system website](https://cacwt.dss.ca.gov), which is hosted at the following URL:

<https://cacwt.dss.ca.gov>. **Detailed instructions for trainers on how to administer these evaluations are located in the Evaluation Guide, which can be found in the trainer materials section in CACWT.**

Every training type (Common Core, Supervisor Core, and Continuing Training) has an evaluation component. It is necessary to follow the ***step-by-step instructions detailed in the Evaluation Guide*** in order to preserve the integrity and consistency of the training evaluation process. Additionally, trainers should not allow trainees to take away or make copies of any evaluation materials.

A high level of statewide standardization and consistency is required—with fidelity both to the curriculum and to delivery standards—in order to reliably use the collected data to serve the purposes described above. Thus, trainers must follow the curriculum as it is written and include all activities.

Note: Trainers should NOT view evaluations before the training. Please teach to the Trainer’s Guide and not the evaluation. This will allow us to evaluate the curriculum properly so that we can use the data to make improvements to the curriculum.

## Course Overview

Federal and State law and policy require that the Dependency and Delinquency Courts, Child Welfare Agencies and Probation inquire about, locate, and involve fathers. These laws outline additional mandates to locate and involve father’s relatives and Tribe(s) in the case of an Indian child. However, research continues to show that fathers are often excluded in court hearings, case planning activities, placement opportunities, and in reunification efforts. Paternal relatives tend to be excluded as well. Research also continues to show that when fathers are involved, children and youth have much better outcomes, including positive overall safety, permanency, and well-being.

## Agenda

<b>9:00—10:00 am</b>	<b>Segment 1: Welcome and Ice Breaker</b>
<b>10:00—10:45 am</b>	<b>Segment 2: How are we doing at involving fathers?</b>
<b>10:45—11:00 am</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
<b>11:00—12:00 noon</b>	<b>Segment 3: Labels and Laws</b>
<b>12:00 – 1:00 pm</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
<b>1:00—2:00 pm</b>	<b>Segment 4: Internal Biases and Personal Practice</b>
<b>2:00—2:15 pm</b>	<b>BREAK</b>
<b>2:15—3:15</b>	<b>Segment 6: Agency/Structural Barriers and Leadership</b>
<b>3:15 – 4:00 pm</b>	<b>Segment 7: Wrap Up and Evaluations</b>



# Learning Objectives

## **KNOWLEDGE:**

- K1. Identify at least two ways engaging fathers and their relatives/tribe(s) is important to the well-being of their children.
- K2. Describe three elements of practice used to meaningfully engage fathers.
- K3. Define two of the labels used to describe fathers in child welfare proceedings.

## **SKILLS:**

- S1. Assess current agency practice and/or policy regarding welcoming and serving fathers and paternal relatives/tribe(s).
- S2. Examine personal biases and their effect on inclusion of fathers and paternal relatives/tribe(s) in individual child welfare practice.

## **VALUES:**

- V1. Value the importance of maintaining and supporting relationships between children and their fathers and paternal relatives/tribe(s).
- V2. Value a culturally-responsive, strengths-based approach to engaging fathers and their relatives/tribe(s).

# Lesson Plan

Segment	Methodology and Learning Objectives
<b>Segment 1: Welcome</b> 60 minutes 9:00 – 10:00 am	1A: Welcome (5 minutes) 1B: Pre-Course Evaluation (15 minutes) 1C: Group Agreements and Learning Objectives (10 minutes) 1D: Ice Breaker (30 minutes) <i>PowerPoint slides: 1-10</i> <i>Learning Objectives: V1, V2</i>
<b>Segment 2: How are we doing at involving fathers?</b> 45 minutes 10:00 – 10:45 am	2A: Lecture (10 minutes) 2B: Poll and Discussion (15 minutes) 2C: Video or Father Co-Trainer's Story (20 minutes) <i>PowerPoint slides:</i> <i>Learning Objectives: K1, V1, V2</i>
10:45 – 11:00 am 15 minutes Break	
<b>Segment 3: Labels and Laws</b> 60 minutes 11:00 am – 12:00 noon	3A: Video of Six Photographers and Small Group Discussion (20 minutes) 3B: Lecture on labels and legalese (15 minutes) 3C: Group Activity (20 minutes) 3D: Quick overview of relevant laws (5 minutes) <i>PowerPoint slides:</i> <i>Learning Objectives: K3</i>

**12:00 – 1:00 pm**

**60 minutes**

**LUNCH**

**Segment 4: Internal Biases and Practice**

**60 minutes**

**1:00-2:00pm**

4A: Questionnaire (10 minutes)

4B: What we hear from Fathers or Father Co-Trainer Experience (25 minutes)

4C: Practice Elements: Action Plan (25 minutes)

*PowerPoint slides:*

*Learning Objectives: K2, S2, V1, V2*

**2:00– 2:15 pm**

**15 minutes**

**BREAK**

**Segment 5: Agency Assessment and Leadership**

**60 minutes**

**2:15 – 3:15 pm**

5A: Agency Assessment (10 minutes)

5B: Beyond Invitation Discussion and Practice Share (50 minutes)

*PowerPoint slides:*

*Learning Objectives: S1, V1, V2*

**Segment 6: Wrap up and Evaluation**

**45 minutes**

**3:15 – 4:00 pm**

6A: Wrap Up (10 minutes)

6B: Post-Course Evaluation (20 minutes)

6C: Satisfaction Survey (15 minutes)

*PowerPoint slides:*

# Segment 1: Welcome

## ACTIVITY 1A: WELCOME

**Estimated Activity Time:** 5 minutes

**Materials:** None

**Trainee Content:** Trainee Guide

**Slides:** 1-2

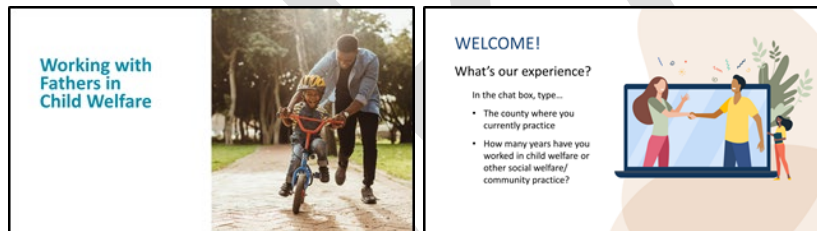
### Description of Activity:

The trainer will welcome participants, introduce themselves, and gather the number of years of child welfare experience the group has collectively.

### Before the Activity:

Thoroughly prepare for training by carefully reviewing all course materials (this guide, Trainee Guide, and PowerPoint presentation).

### During the Activity:



- The trainer or trainers welcome the participants and introduce themselves.
  - Primary trainer: Share your name, who you work for, and a very quick synopsis of your experience.
  - Father co-trainer (if present): Share your name, your status as a father with lived experience in the child welfare system, and a very brief synopsis of your experience. There will be time to share more details throughout this course.
- Ask participants to put in the chat how many years they have worked in child welfare or other social/community work. Add up the years and announce the total. Say, “We have \_\_\_ many years of experience in this room today. That represents a tremendous amount of knowledge and expertise. Which is a good thing, because a large part of this course is sharing what you know with me and with each other.” Remember, this is a course for

working professionals, it is a good to start by honoring their collective expertise. If for some reason you have a group of trainees without much experience, it's still good to add up the years or months that they do have to remind them that they collectively have more experience than any one of them, so can still share a lot.

- In-person classes: discuss logistics related to the training site (cell phones off, breaks, parking, bathrooms).
- Check that the trainees have access to their Trainee Guide for use throughout the day.
- Review CACWT attendance procedures.
- For virtual classes:
  - Video on – must participate in this session
  - Mute button on – unless asked to unmute
  - Add pronouns to your participant name (everyone should do this, do not assume you can tell by what folks look like)
  - Internet providers – If you get bumped off, just re-sign in
  - Use of Chat, Menti-meter or Polls
  - Thumbs up; raise your hand – practice now
  - Chat – To everyone; to trainer only
  - Questions? Problems?

## ACTIVITY 1B: PRE-COURSE EVALUATION

**Estimated Activity Time:** 15 minutes

**Materials:** Evaluation Guide

**Trainee Content:** None

**Slides:** 3

### Description of Activity:

The trainer will direct trainees to complete the evaluation(s) to receive completion status for the course. All evaluation materials for trainers and trainees should be accessed through [the California Child Welfare Training \(CACWT\) system website](https://cacwt.dss.ca.gov/), which is hosted at the following URL: <https://cacwt.dss.ca.gov/>. Please make sure to follow the evaluation instructions located in the latest version of the Evaluation Guide which is included in the trainer materials section in CACWT.

### Before the Activity:

Read through, from beginning to end, the instructions related to this training located in the latest version of the Evaluation Guide.

## During the Activity:

**Evaluation**

In order to receive course completion status, trainees will complete all evaluations through the [California Child Welfare Training \(CACWT\) Statewide Learning Management System](#).

On your browser, navigate to:  
<https://cacwt.dss.ca.gov>  
and log in using your username and password.

Display Slide 3

## ACTIVITY 1C: GROUP AGREEMENTS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

<b>Estimated Activity Time:</b>	10 minutes
<b>Materials:</b>	Chart paper or Word document
<b>Trainee Content:</b>	Learning Objectives in Trainee Guide pg. xx
<b>Slides:</b>	4-6

## Description of Activity:

### Group Agreements:

- Trainer should set the stage to ensure the participants are co-creating a safe learning environment free of judgment and encouraging a growth mindset. The goal is to allow us the opportunity to have some courageous conversations around how we tend to treat fathers and how we can change/shift our reactions and interactions to improve father engagement statewide. Make sure this is set out at the beginning of the session because change only comes with acknowledgment and support. We WILL discuss bias, assumptions, and disparity throughout today's training.

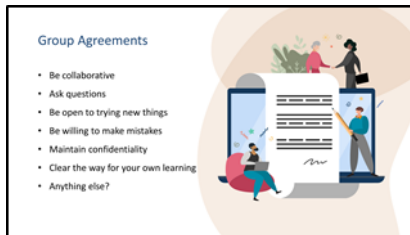
### Learning Objectives:

- Quick review of the Learning Objectives. Trainees identify which one is of most interest to them giving the trainer some sense of the groups' interests.

## Before the Activity:

Read through the explanations for the proposed Group Agreements. If training virtually, learn how to share a word processing document like Word to use as you would chart paper in the classroom. Document the groups' suggested Group Agreements. Be familiar with the Learning Objectives.

## During the Activity:



### **Group Agreements:**

1. Facilitate a discussion about creating group agreements for the class. Explain that the goal of this activity is to co-create an environment and expectations that will best facilitate learning for everyone.
2. Ask: What do you need to effectively participate and learn today?
3. Capture what is shared on a Word document or using the Annotate feature (or chart paper/white board if in person) so everyone can see the agreements.
4. Offer the following examples of group agreements<sup>1</sup> as needed.

**Collaboration** - We need partnership to have engagement and that works best if we agree we are not here to blame or shame. We are here because we share a common concern for the safety and well-being of children. Can we agree to work together to promote each other's learning and growth?

**Ask lots of questions** - Point out that the trainer can't make the training relevant for each person because there are many people in the room with different experiences and different needs. Participants can make it relevant for themselves by asking questions relevant to their own specific experiences and needs. Can we agree that asking questions is part of our learning environment today?

**Be Open to Trying New Things** - As professional we feel more comfortable and competent sticking with what we know. We don't always like it when new things come along. Sometimes it feels uncomfortable to try new things so we tend to back away from the new thing telling ourselves things like "she doesn't know what she's talking about...she has never worked in our community with the people we work with..." But to learn something new we go through that uncomfortable stage to get to the other side. Can we agree to try new things even if we feel uncomfortable?

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<sup>1</sup> Modified from material shared by trainer Betty Hanna.

**Make Mistakes** - As professionals we don't like to make mistakes. And when we make mistakes we feel discouraged and beat ourselves up. But, if we are going to learn new things, mistakes are part of the process. Even more important than the willingness to make mistakes is the willingness to admit we are wrong even when we don't want to be. Growth requires that we are open to changing our minds based on new information received. Unless they are harmful to us, we must also be willing to listen carefully and without interrupting to fully hear the views of others. Can we agree to hold space for each others' mistakes today as we try new things and discuss new ideas?


**Confidentiality** - This is just a reminder to refrain from identifying any families, children, co-workers, or other trainees. If someone else shares this type of information, stop them as soon as possible and keep whatever you heard confidential unless it is a safety issue.

**Clear the way for your own learning** – As adult learners we realize you come with knowledge, skills and experience. The intention of this curriculum is that you will have an opportunity to share this via large and small group discussions. Please come prepared to set aside this day for your learning, please do not bring work into the classroom or try to multi-task, this is distracting to other participants as well as to the trainer/facilitator. This includes being on time, sharing the floor, cell phones and alerts off, etc. Can you agree to commit to your own learning today?

After the group has created their list of agreements, ask everyone to use the “thumbs up” reaction button or to affirm their agreement in some way if in person. Move on to reviewing the Learning Objectives.

- Ask the trainees to read through the Learning Objectives in their Trainee Guide (while showing the slides for a few minutes as well). Ask them to chat or tell the group which of them is most interesting or a few that they are excited to learn more about. Ask if anyone has questions about the Learning Objectives.


**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES**



**KNOWLEDGE:**

- K1. Identify at least two ways engaging fathers and/or their relatives is important to the well-being of their children.
- K2. Describe three elements of practice used to include and welcome fathers.
- K3. Define two of the labels used to describe fathers in child welfare proceedings.

**SKILLS AND VALUES OBJECTIVES**



**SKILLS:**

- S1. Assess current agency practice and/or policy regarding welcoming and serving fathers and paternal relatives.
- S2. Examine personal biases and their effect on inclusion of fathers and paternal relatives in individual child welfare practice.

**VALUES:**

- V1. Value the importance of maintaining and supporting relationships between children and their fathers and paternal relatives.
- V2. Value a culturally-responsive, strengths-based approach to engaging fathers and their relatives.



## ACTIVITY 1D: ICE BREAKER

**Estimated Activity Time:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** None

**Trainee Content:** None

**Slides:** xx-xx

### Description of Activity:

Participants will spend time in breakout rooms sharing something important that they learned from their father or male role model. This activity serves two purposes. The first is to allow the trainees to introduce themselves to each other in small groups. The second is to help them begin to consider how important fathers are in the lives and well-being of their children.

### Before the Activity:

- Review the instructions below.

### During the Activity:

#### Ice Breaker

1. Share something important you learned from your father or male role model.
2. Pick one or two words that summarize that experience.
3. Have one member of your group make a list of those words.

- Explain: You will be going into small groups. In the group, each person will have a few minutes to tell the other members of the group three things:
  - their name,
  - what work they do in child welfare, and
  - a few words that represent the important things (positive or negative) that they learned from their father or male role model\*. For example: starting a campfire, how to be loving, absence, etc.

\*If anyone in the group didn't have a father or male role model, they can answer with what they saw other kids learning from their dads or what they wish they could have learned from their father or a male role model.
- Ask them to assign a note-taker who will report out their list of words to the larger group.
- Assign trainees to breakout rooms with 3-4 participants each. Tell them they will have 15 minutes to introduce themselves and make their list.

Report out:

- As the groups report out their list of words and phrases, organize them into “mostly positive” or “mostly negative.” Discuss how powerful (either for good or for bad) these relationships are. They cannot be skipped over when we are working for the safety, permanency, and well being of children. Even if Dad is currently a “mostly negative” force, that doesn’t mean the child doesn’t still want to know him and/or his family. Even the trainees who are reporting mostly bad stuff they learned from their fathers—would they want to not know him? Or would they just wish it was different and better to know him? There is some possibility that, with help, the fathers you work with can be better.
- Recognize also that every one of the participants and the trainer has had a different experience with their own fathers (either present or absent); spouses and other males in their life – good or bad, and that these experiences find their way into our work.
- Acknowledge that while there are similar experiences, each father/child relationship is unique and the same is true for the children and youth in the child welfare system. That priceless uniqueness is the reason we’re going to spend today talking about the importance of working with fathers in child welfare.

### **Transition to the Next Segment:**

Move on to Segment 2: How are we doing at involving fathers?

# Segment 2: How are we doing at involving fathers?

## ACTIVITY 2A: OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH

<b>Estimated Activity Time:</b>	15 minutes
<b>Materials:</b>	PowerPoint slides
<b>Trainee Content:</b>	How are we doing at involving fathers
<b>Slides:</b>	11-24

### Description of Activity:

Trainer provides short lecture about national data on the gaps with involving fathers in the child welfare system, and research on the importance of working well with fathers.

### Before the Activity:

- Review lesson plan, PPTs

### During the Activity:

Begin lecture using the following content:

So, how is the child welfare system doing at working with fathers?

Not good. We're not good at it overall. Decades of research and case reviews have shown us that fathers are not successfully engaged within the child welfare system.



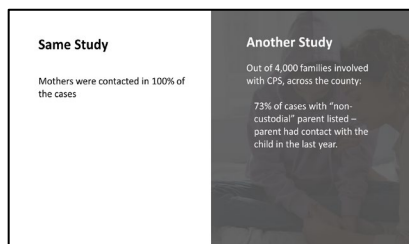
**How are we doing at involving Dads?**

- First Study
  - 2,000 children removed from homes where father did not reside;
  - 88% - Agency identified the father;
  - 55% - Agency made contact with father;
  - 30% - Father visited child
  - 28% - Father expressed interest in child living with him
- What About the Dads? US Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2006

The slide also features a photograph of a man and a young boy sitting on a wooden bench outdoors, engaged in conversation.

An extensive study conducted by the US Department of Health and Human Services back in 2006, called *What About the Dads? Child Welfare Agencies' Efforts to Identify, Locate and Involve Nonresident Fathers* showed that out of the 2,000 children removed from homes where a father did not reside during the study, only 88% of the fathers were identified, the agency only contacted 55% of those fathers, and in only 30% of the cases did the father visit the child. This shows the compounding effect of not identifying fathers—if they aren't identified, they can't be

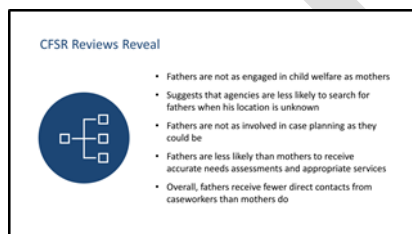
contacted, and if they can't be contacted they can't connect with the child, and neither can their families or tribe(s).



Meanwhile, in these same cases, mothers were contacted 100% of the time.

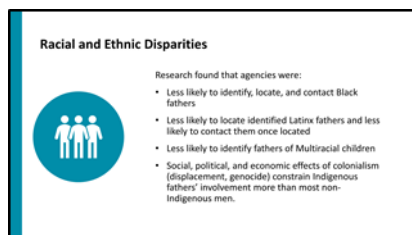
Another nationwide study in 2009 revealed that 73% of non-custodial parents had been in contact with their child that year.

- Majority of these non-custodial parents were dads
- They were not the perpetrators of abuse
- And this contact shows that they aren't as "absent" as they sometimes seem to be or as they are often described
- Think about the term "non-custodial" parent – think about your first reaction to this term
  - This is a label we often give to parents
  - It means the parent wasn't at the home at the time of the maltreatment and they would like to have placement of their child
  - Each situation is unique, you cannot assume to know why the parent is not at home—you have to ask and in order to learn what's going on, you have to engage with both parents, the child or youth, the relatives and friends.



Child and Family Services Review data reveal that we aren't serving fathers (and therefore their children) as well as we could.

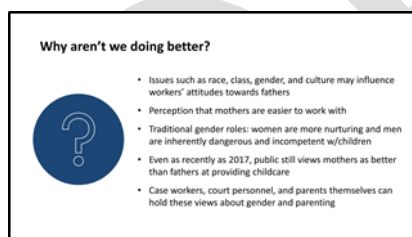
- Fathers are not as engaged in child welfare system as mothers
- Agencies are less likely to search for fathers when his location is unknown
- Fathers could be more involved in case planning
- Fathers are less likely than mothers to receive accurate needs assessments and appropriate services
- Overall, fathers receive fewer direct contacts from caseworkers than mothers do



Racial Disparities in working with fathers: So, not only are racial and ethnic minoritized families overrepresented in the child welfare system compared to the US population (Dettlaff, 2021), but their fathers are also less engaged by the system.

Research found that agencies were less likely to:

- Identify, locate, and contact Black fathers relative to White fathers.
- Locate identified Latinx fathers and less likely to contact them once located
- Identify fathers of Multiracial children (63% of whom were Black) (Arroyo, Zsembik, and Peek 2019).
- For a wide array of social, political, and economic reasons rooted in colonialism (forced relocation, displacement, oppression, and genocide), many Indigenous fathers face challenges in their daily lives that constrain their involvement in fathering and fathering programs to a degree greater than most non-Indigenous men.
- Indigenous fathers also contend with the effects of inter-generational and historic trauma, which can result in many additional obstacles. Specifically, the child welfare system has a horrendous history of forced assimilation, residential schools, and family/clan/tribe disruption resulting in deep and historic mistrust. (Ball, 2010)



Why aren't we doing better at working with fathers?

There is no clear answer to this question, but a recent study in Children and Youth Services Review explored some ideas:

“Issues such as race, class, gender, and culture may influence workers’ attitudes towards fathers on their cases. Families involved in child welfare are disproportionately poor and non-white while child welfare workers, particularly front-line staff, are predominately female, white, and middle class.”

“Researchers have found that child welfare workers view mothers as easier to work with than fathers, in part due to men’s lack of child care skills...”

“Child welfare often views fathers as irrelevant and therefore not the primary target for services.”

Traditional gender roles view women as more nurturing and better able to care for children than men and men as inherently dangerous and incompetent (Brewsaugh, Masyn, and Salloum, 2018)

Even as recently as 2017, studies found that public attitudes still view mothers as better than fathers at providing childcare (Parker & Livingston 2017)

**Importance of Fathers**

Research suggests that children in households with absent fathers are 2-3 times more likely to use drugs, have increased educational needs, and exhibit more health, emotional and behavioral problems than children with present fathers (Horn & Sylvester, 2002).




Why do we need to work more diligently with fathers?

Research suggests that children with involved, loving fathers are much more likely to do well in school; have healthy self-esteem; exhibit empathy and pro-social behavior; and avoid high-risk behaviors such as drug use, truancy, and delinquent activity, than children who have uninvolved fathers (Horn & Sylvester, 2002, p. 15).

Studies show that fathers are as important as mothers and in similar ways-- there is evidence that fathers' parenting behaviors affect children's outcomes in ways that are similar to the effects of mothers' parenting behaviors. Also, fathers and mothers are becoming more similar in terms of their roles, the types of behaviors with which they engage children, and the amount of time they spend with children. (Fagan, et.al. 2014).

- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Children with lesbian or non-binary parents have similar positive outcomes as children with engaged fathers in heterosexual households. Positive reports about father involvement should never be used to belittle or degrade families that do not include a male parent. Nor should they be used against single mothers. Fathers are not the **ONLY** way to raise a healthy child, but when they are part of the child's life, positive outcomes have been measured.

**When Fathers are involved in child welfare services**



- Children spend fewer days in foster care
- More likely to be reunified with parents
- Protect against future maltreatment
- Positive systemic effects beyond the individual family

When fathers are involved in child welfare services:

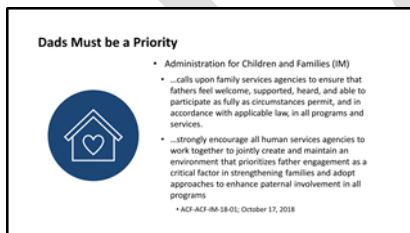
- Children spend fewer days in foster care
- Children are more likely to be reunified with parents
- Their involvement is a potential protective factor against future maltreatment
- Fathers can offer additional perspectives about the needs and strengths of their children and resources within the community and family
- Fathers and paternal relatives can offer social or financial resources like health insurance, survivor benefits, child support funds
- Positive systemic effects beyond the individual father and his family—see quote below.

“The well-being of men is inherently connected to the well-being of women and children because women and children are so often affected by the actions of their fathers, brothers, friends, husbands, and partners. Thus, [high-quality] social work practice with men not only affects individuals, but can also produce positive systemic effects.” (Shafer and Wendt, 2015)



When case workers have greater awareness of and intentionality about engaging fathers and their relatives and tribes that high-quality practice leads to:

- An increased number of fathers who were located, contacted, appeared in court and referred to services and/or reunified with their children
- Increases in referrals to father engagement or father-specific services
- Sharpens focus on engaging paternal relatives and tribes
- More children being returned home to their Dad



- This is an Information Memorandum from the Children’s Bureau from 2018, and is part of your Guide. It is not vague. The federal government is pushing us to strengthen our practice with fathers because that leads to better outcomes (safety, permanency and well-being) for children and families.

- “In most instances, child welfare, child support enforcement and family assistance have largely been compliance-oriented systems that carry a threat of punitive action, including sanctions as strong as arrest, jail time, and permanent loss of parental rights to a child. These systems have not historically been organized around facilitating and incentivizing positive behavior change; and historically have not created cultures of engagement that are likely to encourage paternal involvement. With this in mind, **ACF calls upon family services agencies to ensure that fathers feel welcome, supported, heard, and able to participate as fully as circumstances permit, and in accordance with applicable law, in all programs and services.**
- ...strongly encourage all human services agencies including child welfare agencies, courts, office of child support, public assistance & childcare, head start, family & youth services to work together to jointly **create and maintain an environment that prioritizes father engagement as a critical factor in strengthening families and adopt approaches to enhance paternal involvement in all family support and child welfare related programs**  
ACF-ACF-IM-18-01; October 17, 2018



Effective Case Worker practice with fathers can—

- Increase the number of fathers who were located, contacted, appeared in court and referred to services and/or reunified with their children
- Increase referrals to father engagement or father-specific services
- Sharpen focus on engaging paternal relatives
- Result in more children being returned home to their Dad

## ACTIVITY 2B: POLL AND DISCUSSION

<b>Estimated Activity Time:</b>	10 minutes
<b>Materials:</b>	In-person: Post-its or notepaper and pens
<b>Trainee Content:</b>	Chat privately with trainer
<b>Slides:</b>	xx-xx



## Description of Activity:

Trainer will facilitate a discussion about effectively working with fathers. This should include discussion about case workers' responsibility in making sure they have gone beyond just "inviting" fathers and have moved into actively creating an environment that prioritizes their involvement in the full range of case activities. We are trying to examine the difference between "inviting" and "involving" fathers in our work.

## Before the Activity:

- Review the instructions below and PPT. No need to set up a zoom poll because trainees will simply chat their answers privately to the trainer.  
In-person classroom: Make sure participants have paper and pens to answer privately.

## During the Activity:



Trainer: Ask the participants to answer this question in a private chat to only you (if you are in-person you can have them hand you pieces of paper with their answers). Collect the responses in a list and then move to the next slide.

[Instructions to chat privately in zoom: open the chat function, click the drop-down menu above where you type, select the trainer's name.]



This slide reverses the phrasing of the question to help the trainees think about who is responsible for creating an effective working relationship between dads and child welfare. Read the list of the trainee's initial responses to "What is keeping Dads from effectively working with the child welfare system."

DISCUSSION: ask them if their answers to the question on this slide (What is keeping the child welfare system from effectively working with Dads") are the same as their previous answers. If they are different, why?

Do their answers to the previous question make sense when the responsibility is changed?

WRAP UP: We are the ones who are responsible for an effective working relationship. Child welfare workers, supervisors, trainers, everyone in the child welfare system. We hold all the power in the situation. We have his child and all the information about what is happening, what is likely to happen, how he can be involved, etc. We are the only ones who can “create an environment that prioritizes [him]...” as the federal Administration of Children and Families has highlighted that we must do.

People may feel or have heard the phrase, “You can’t want it more than them.” But that is not true. You, as a case worker, can and should want a relationship with the parents and families of children and youth in your care much more than they could ever possibly want a relationship with you.

You represent terrible news, trauma, powerlessness, bureaucracy, change. It is up to you to want to work successfully together more than they do, and to earn their trust by treating each of them with dignity and respect.

If there is a father who doesn’t want to work with you, that is not a reason to stop trying with him. The only time you quit is if he poses a safety risk, and even then you will keep trying with his relatives and Tribe(s). Don’t give up on Dads!

## ACTIVITY 2C: VIDEO OR FATHER CO-TRAINER’S STORY

<b>Estimated Activity Time:</b>	15 minutes
<b>Materials:</b>	Father Co-Trainer can create slides of his own
<b>Trainee Content:</b>	none
<b>Slides:</b>	xx-xx

### Description of Activity:

This activity is time for the Father Co-Trainer to provide an overview of the barriers that fathers commonly face in the child welfare system and to tell the participants about his experience with the child welfare system.

If your training does not have a father co-trainer, deliver the content on barriers and play the video of Joey Cordero’s story, a father with lived experience in child welfare. Joey is one of the original developers of this curriculum and an instructor for Northern Academy. Read his comments below after the video.

## Before the Activity:

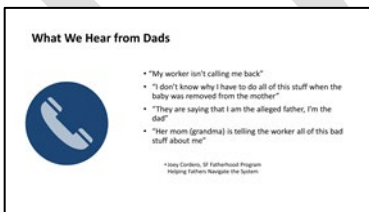
- Review the material and PPT for short lecture.
- Father co-trainer presentation prepared ahead of time. He can provide his own PowerPoint and share his screen if that's helpful, or simply be ready to share.  
In particular, he should prepare to share the following:
  1. How he felt when he first understood that his child was in child welfare custody. (Keep in mind that the details of the case are not necessary to share)
  2. A few of the most significant barriers he encountered.
  3. How he overcame those barriers.
  4. What help (if any) he received from child welfare professionals. If none, what help he wishes he would have received.
  5. The outcome of his experience.

## During the Activity:

2006 study	2014 study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Poverty</li><li>• Low literacy</li><li>• Substance abuse/ criminal history</li><li>• Incarceration</li><li>• Parenting skills</li><li>• Lack of awareness of fatherhood</li><li>• Conflicting DV orders</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relationship difficulties with the mother</li><li>• Lack of a valid address or phone number</li><li>• Distrust of agency or social worker</li></ul>

- Father Co-Trainer: these are barriers that fathers may experience identified from the 2006 study and also from an updated study in 2014: poverty (makes transportation and missing work difficult), low literacy (lack of understanding about what's happening or being asked of him), substance abuse, criminal history, incarceration (any of these may increase fear of court and systems), lack of parenting skills (may create shame or false belief that he can't be a benefit to his kids), didn't know they were the father, conflicting domestic violence or restraining orders between himself and the mother, his relationship with the mother is challenging, no reliable address or phone number (this can also be that he is living somewhere where messages are not reliably delivered), distrust of child welfare agency or social worker.
- All of these barriers are important, many are inter-related and outside the scope of what we can change or address with the family, but this distrust IS WITHIN OUR CONTROL and is our responsibility to eradicate.
  - Are you surprised by any of these barriers?
- Potential Additional Barriers:
  - Fathers are unknown, incarcerated, hard to contact for whatever reason—these are not excuses to stop trying, they are just added challenges
  - Dad “refuses to participate” (or an even worse description that is still sometimes used is that he is “non-compliant.” This sort of language centers child welfare rules rather than focusing on the needs, strengths, and dignity of the family)

- He stops calling, attending visits, etc. Often when this happens, the worker’s engagement may also stop and the whole story becomes “father stopped participating”
- There could be fear – reporting to child support, minor offenses showing up in court, immigration stuff, etc.
- His avoidance could come from anxiety, mis-information, shame, poverty, fear that he can’t provide for children, could be lots of underlying reasons
- Father is working and can’t participate at the times planned
- Services or facilities are designed for mothers only
- Fathers are not seen as caretakers of their children
- Attorneys that are “hands-off”
- Even if the father doesn’t want to reunify, it is critical to maintain the connection between child & father. What you do can help this connect a great deal.
  - Continue to invite father to CFT meetings, he is a support to the child
  - Continue to update him about what is happening and what options are being considered—it may be that when the child’s placement is becoming clear, he may be more inclined to give input
  - Life books – can we include a story about your family that we can include in your child’s life book? This usually opens up the door for more engagement and what is truly important – providing well-being for the child
  - Child Welfare intervention can be a positive avenue for change, improving relationship between father and child. CFT meetings can be powerful.
  - Stay open-minded and hopeful that father’s perspectives and behaviors can change
- Some fathers don’t know where their children were until child welfare gets involved and/or they haven’t been around because mother told him he wasn’t the father. News that he may be the father and information about the child is a huge life event for him. It takes time and support to help process that. You can be part of that support!

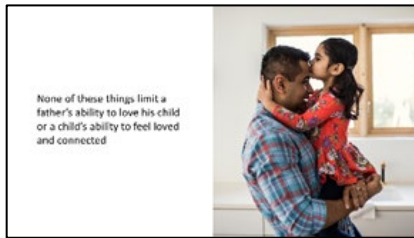


What we hear from fathers in child welfare—these are often their experience of systemic barriers that they only know as obstacles in their own life. (Always remember this is their life, their family, so it is intensely personal as it should be!)

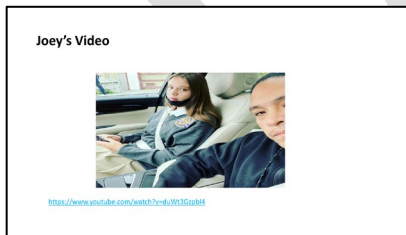
- “My worker isn’t calling me back”
- “I don’t know why I have to do all of this stuff when the baby was removed from the mother”
- “They are saying that I am the alleged father, but I’m the dad”
- “Her mom (grandma) is telling the worker all of this bad stuff about me”

(Examples from Joey Cordero, SF Fatherhood Program Helping Fathers Navigate the System)

- These common concerns are relayed to direct service providers in the field as well as during fatherhood group meetings, but not necessarily brought up to the case worker – out of fear of how it will be received. Fathers tend to feel more comfortable in groups with peers or with parent partners who have been through the experience and with whom they have a more trusting relationship. These groups are essential for fathers to voice questions, fears and emotions.
- Have you heard some of these things from fathers?
  - Perhaps dads need some more patience and encouragement
  - Perhaps the father does not understand why he has to participate in a case plan when the child was removed from the mother (non-offending parent)
  - Helping him understand the child welfare language, procedures, laws, etc.
  - Help the father understand that he matters – really get to know him



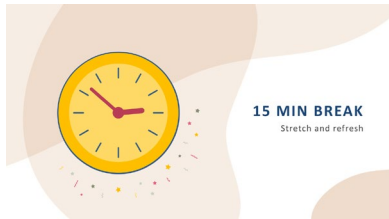
- None of the barriers we have talked about today limit a father's ability to love and connect with his children.
- Nor do they limit a child's need and desire to be connected to their father.
- Relationships are what children and youth need to feel a sense of belonging, of being loved and feeling connected to others.
- In heterosexual families, a child's father and his relatives are half her family, and kids want and deserve to feel whole, to know their parents and relatives. Finding them is not "extra work" it is essential.



- If you do not have a father co-trainer, play Joey's [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=duWt3Gzpb14)  
URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=duWt3Gzpb14>
- Trainer reads notes from Joey Cordero after the video:
  - Important to tell the father he has rights, and what those rights are
  - What made the difference – the worker asking about my relationship with my daughter

- Feedback I would give my worker: providing more step-by-step guidance about next steps in child welfare process – what is next to have my child returned to me?
  - Example: Parents can ask for a CFT to be held
- Important to ensure services match actual safety goals and reason for child welfare intervention – culturally relevant, individualized, etc.

For April vetting: Is there anything Joey wants to add or clarify here?



- 15-minute break

### **Transition to the Next Segment:**

Move on to Segment 3: Labels and Laws

## Segment 3: Labels & Laws

### ACTIVITY 3A: SIX PHOTOGRAPHERS AND DISCUSSION

<b>Estimated Activity Time:</b>	20 minutes
<b>Materials:</b>	Video link and zoom poll
<b>Trainee Content:</b>	Discussion Questions
<b>Slides:</b>	26-31

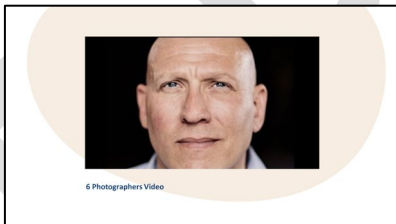
#### Description of Activity:

This segment goes deeper into how our labels, assumptions, and biases about fathers perpetuate the ongoing problem of lack of engagement with fathers in child welfare.

#### Before the Activity:

- Review PPTs, test and prepare link to video. Set up the poll question. If you are delivering this course in-person in a classroom, you can have folks write true or false on a piece of paper and collect those and count them.

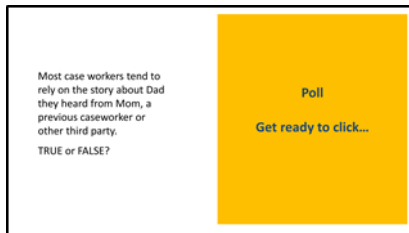
#### During the Activity:



- Play the [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FTyPFyMDK8&feature=emb_title)  
URL: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FTyPFyMDK8&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FTyPFyMDK8&feature=emb_title)
- Ask trainees to share their reactions to this video.
- Summarize:
  - Just as the man being photographed was “labelled” and then portrayed by the photographers to align with their internalized beliefs, preconceived notions, and biases about that label, we often hear similar single-story labels about Dads.
  - Trying to avoid the labels that may be documented in case notes in order to mitigate bias is hard as you will likely see the initial petition, referral, etc. Therefore, it is your responsibility to be curious beyond those initial labels, find out more words that fill out his story, ask him about himself and his perspective on what is happening in his life and with his child(ren).



- Violent, Absent, Unknown or Whereabouts Unknown, Deadbeat, Homeless, Jobless, Failed to protect, In Custody, Ex-con, etc.
- These labels can follow the father on the report and throughout the case, especially when we don't take the time to try to learn more about him.
- These are some of the stories we hear or put together ourselves about Dad. We tend to want to find a clear label and put fathers into a category in order to move forward. But none of these can possibly sum up an entire complex human being.
- When you hear or read these kinds of labels, it is very important to consider--
  - Are these words that a father uses to describe himself?
  - Are they words that a child would say about their dad?
  - If not, then we need to find out what else is true. What more is there to him and his relationship with his child(ren)? What does he want that relationship to be like?



- This is a poll question—“Most case workers rely on the story about Dad they heard from Mom, a previous caseworker, or other third party. True or False?”
- Trainer can ask follow up questions such as:
  - If yes, do you think this practice needs to change? How can we do that?
  - If no, how do we gather the additional information needed to expand the story?
- Remain mindful of bias/implicit bias!
  - So important to stay open minded when engaging with the father, vs. staying attached to what is documented in the case notes/court reports (especially with prior case history)
  - Don't map your previous experiences onto parents you've just met. Even if you meet the exact same family again, some things will be different and it is your job to pay attention to the individuals involved in this case.
  - Just because a case seems similar to one you had before doesn't mean that it actually is. Work hard against stereotypes and assuming you know what the outcome will be.
- Child welfare is still a “maternally-focused” system, inherently biased against fathers – changing this is a huge culture shift. The policies have shifted, but our practice has not.



## ACTIVITY 3B: LECTURE ON LABELS AND LEGALESE

**Estimated Activity Time:** 15 minutes

**Materials:**

**Trainee Content:**

**Slides:** XX-XX

### Description of Activity:

This activity provides trainees with an overview of common labels and legal terms used to define fathers in child welfare work and court proceedings. It is a chance to have trainees consider what the experience of “being labelled” feels like, and how to incorporate elements into their practice to avoid using unnecessary, incomplete, or inaccurate labels.

### Before the Activity:

- Become familiar with legal terms in this curriculum and with mandates regarding father engagement. Review PPTs and trainer notes.

### During the Activity:



Have the trainees review the important legal/code definitions used to describe fathers in their Guide (same as below).

**Important Definitions:**

- **Parent:**  
The natural or adoptive father or mother, whether married or unmarried; or other adult fulfilling the parental role [Child Welfare Services Manual 31-002(p)(1)]
- **Non-custodial parent:**  
The parent of a child removed from home pursuant to W&I §361, with whom the minor was not residing at the time that the events or conditions arose that brought the minor within the provisions of W&I §300, who desires to assume custody of the minor. [Child Welfare Services Manual, 31-002(n)(2)]

- **Alleged Father:**  
Any and all men identified as a possible father of a child [Family Code §7664]
- **Biological Father:**  
DNA Testing determines that he is biologically related to the child [Family Code §7635.5]
- **Presumed Father:**
  - Conclusive presumption: the child of a wife cohabiting with her husband, who is not impotent or sterile, is conclusively presumed to be a child of the marriage. (FC §7540)
  - If the court finds that the conclusions of all the experts, as disclosed by the evidence based on blood tests, are that the husband is not the father of the child, the question of paternity of the husband shall be resolved accordingly.
  - The motion for blood tests under this section may be filed not later than two years from the child's date of birth (FC §7541)
  - Declaration of Paternity: (January 1, 1995) prior to an unmarried mother leaving any hospital, the person responsible for registering live births shall provide to the natural mother and shall attempt to provide, at the place of birth, to the man identified by the natural mother as the natural father, a voluntary declaration of paternity together with the written materials described in Family Code § 7572
  - He and the child's natural mother are or have been married to each other and the child is born during the marriage, or within 300 days after the marriage is terminated by death, annulment, declaration of invalidity, or divorce, or after a judgment of separation is entered by a court.
  - Before the child's birth, he and the child's natural mother have attempted to marry each other by a marriage solemnized in apparent compliance with law, although the attempted marriage is or could be declared invalid, and additional requirements.
  - After the child's birth, he and the child's natural mother have married, or attempted to marry, each other by a marriage solemnized in apparent compliance with law,
  - He receives the child into his home and openly holds out the child as his natural child. (Family Code §7611)
  - Case Law: Adoption of Kelsey S. (1992) 1 Cal 4th, 816
  - "...if unwed father promptly comes forward and demonstrates full commitment to his parental responsibilities—emotional, financial, and otherwise—his federal constitutional right to due process prohibits termination of his parental relationship absent showing of his unfitness as parent; and (3) remand was required to determine whether father demonstrated sufficient commitment to his parental responsibilities."
- **Legal Father (four ways):**
  1. Any court issues finding of paternity
  2. Another court ordered child support
  3. DNA testing completed
  4. Copy of any of the above in court file
- **NREFM:**  
A "nonrelative extended family member" is defined as an adult caregiver who has an established familial relationship with a relative of the child, as defined in paragraph (2) of subdivision (c) of Section 361.3, OR a familial or mentoring relationship with the child. The county welfare

department shall verify the existence of a relationship through interviews with the parent and child or with one or more third parties. The parties may include relatives of the child, teachers, medical professionals, clergy, neighbors, and family friends. [WIC §362.7; 361.3]

- Alleged vs. Presumed father:

An alleged father MAY be offered services and has certain rights. A presumed father MUST be offered services and has additional rights.

- Other labels:

- PNE – Paternity Not Established
- Step-parent / Step-father
- Defacto parent – acting as a parent; Right to come to court, participate and get a lawyer – but could be designated as presumed or NREFM
  - Usually a grandparent that files as Defacto parent
- Case law now says – if child sees this parent as a father figure, they can be designated as a presumed father – psychological connection

[The CA Supreme Court case: In re: Nicholas H., 28 Cal 4<sup>th</sup>, 56, 2002, the court lays out the “relationship” “[I]n the case of an older child [over two years of age] the familial relationship between the child and the man purporting to be the child's father is considerably more palpable than the biological relationship of actual paternity. A man who has lived with a child, treating it as his son or daughter, has developed a relationship with the child that should not be lightly dissolved .... This social relationship is much more important, to the child at least, than a biological relationship of actual paternity ....’ ”  
([Susan H. v. Jack S., supra, 30 Cal.App.4th at p. 1443, 37 Cal.Rptr.2d 120](#), quoting [Estate of Cornelious \(1984\) 35 Cal.3d 461, 465–466, 198 Cal.Rptr. 543, 674 P.2d 245.](#)) See also: In re: Brianna M., (2013)]

- The trainer should point out that the labels that dad gets as he tries to get involved in the case point to hurdles that he must overcome. The label that dad wants is presumed – if possible. However, Dad might not know this or what it means. The trainer will discuss and point out the legal labels and make the audience aware of stereotypes which are another set of labels such as; aggressor, perpetrator and dead beat. Also – Mom does not need to prove her connection or relationship with the child – Dad does!
- One of the most important things we can do to work successfully with fathers is help them to understand these various terms, what they mean, what they allow him to do, his rights.
- Fathers may not know what to do, where is in the process, or even that it IS a process. Where is the end? How will he get there? How will he know he is doing well?
- You might consider having a print out of these terms available whenever you go to a CFT meeting or other space with a father, or posted somewhere fathers can see it. This makes it easy for you to explain, and potentially avoids him having to admit that he doesn't know, which can be challenging (this is especially true if he thinks you or others are behaving as though he should already know).
- Ensure that Dad understands these legal terms and why they are so important.

- How easy or hard would it be to ask to have it explained to you? What if English isn't your first language? What if you aren't sure if your unpaid parking tickets or other minor offense will get you in trouble? These labels and terms are just part of your work, but they are very large, stressful, and confusing EVENTS in the lives of families and their children. The consequences of which label and when they receive it are very serious to them.

**Why is "presumed" the label fathers' want?**



- Once designated a "presumed" father, he is *entitled*, as matter of law, to receive child welfare services to reunify with his child(ren).
- Very importantly, an alleged father MAY receive services, but they aren't required as in a presumed father's case

- Presumed fathers have a constitutional right to receive services as a parent
- Alleged father should be able to receive services, but is not guaranteed those services until he is elevated to presumed.

**What do you think?**

Before a man identified as a possible father can come into the courtroom and participate in the Detention hearing, he must have his paternity established via a court order.

TRUE or FALSE?

**POLL**  
Get ready to click...

- Poll Question: Before a man who is identified as a possible father can come into the courtroom and *participate* in the Detention hearing, he must have his paternity established via a court order. TRUE or FALSE?


**Answer: FALSE**

- The father or fathers, presumed and alleged, shall be provided notice and opportunity to be heard



- Answer is FALSE. [get source from Kelly]

**Paternity Inquiry**



- Case worker and court must pursue information about the father's identity
- Each identified man will receive a notice from the court that he is or may be the father
- Inquirer receiving this information via certified mail, the child has been hurt/is already system-involved, you are required to show up in court
  - What emotions might you feel?
  - What kind of support would you want?

**What is paternal inquiry?**

- At detention hearing, or as soon thereafter as practicable, the court shall inquire of the mother and any other appropriate person as to the identity and address of all presumed or alleged fathers. If after inquiry, one or more men are identified as an alleged father, each shall be provided notice at his last and usual place of abode by certified mail, return receipt requested, alleging that he is or could be the father of the child. WIC 316.2 ROC:

- According to state law, the case worker and court must pursue information about the father's identity. This means Due Diligence until father is identified and found.
- Each identified man will receive a notice from the court that he is or may be the father
- Imagine receiving this information via certified mail, the child has been hurt/is already system involved, you are required to show up in court.
  - What emotions might you feel?
  - What kind of support might you want?

Trainer: allow the trainees to discuss this for a few minutes.

If they are struggling to imagine what this might be like, ask them if they have ever been to court when it wasn't part of their profession. Spending time on the other side of that system is so different. Court is a scary place, a lot can happen, much of it can be difficult to understand. Empathy for how the men who are potential fathers feel is crucial to helping them stay involved in the case, which is how they stay connected with their child(ren).

How can we support fathers through the court process?

**BE THERE:** Supporting people is often just as simple as letting them know they aren't alone. Asking what they need.

**EXPLAIN WHAT YOU KNOW:** Help them feel less powerless by explaining what is happening, what is likely to happen next, and what they are expected to do. If they need accommodations or additional information, advocate for them.

**ASK WHAT THEY NEED:** Men are encouraged by society and traditional gender roles to appear in control, emotionally secure and strong, so you may not always be able to tell how much help they need. It can also be hard to ask for help, so offering help—even if he doesn't accept your help—may allow him to consider you a safe person to ask in the future. This trust-building matters.

**EVEN IF THEY SEEM OKAY:** **Provide support even if they seem to be doing fine.** It can't hurt, and will potentially make it clear that you value their involvement.

**BE ACCOUNTABLE:** You should always use ALL the ICPM Foundational Behaviors, but in this case, it is especially important to Be Accountable! If you do what you say you are going to do, not only is that great modelling behavior, but it can help the fathers you work with you feel more secure.

#### ICPM FOUNDATIONAL BEHAVIORS

**Be open, honest, clear, and respectful in your communication.** 1. Use language and body language that demonstrate an accepting and affirming approach to understanding the family. 2. Ask people how they prefer to be addressed, and address individuals by the name or title and pronouns they request in person and in writing. 3. Show deference to Tribal leadership and their titles in written and verbal communication. 4. Be open and honest about the safety threats and circumstances that brought the family to the attention of the agency, what information can be shared among team members, and what information will be included in court reports. 5. Be transparent about the role of the court and the child welfare agency. 6. Ask family members what method of communication they prefer, use age-appropriate language that everyone can understand, and confirm with family members that your communication meets their language and literacy needs.

**Be accountable.** 1. Model accountability and trust by doing what you say you're going to do, be responsive (including returning calls, texts, and emails within 24 business hours), and be on time (including submitting reports on time and being on time for appointments) and follow ICWA and other

federal and state laws. 2. Be aware of, and take responsibility for, your own biases, missteps, and mistakes.

## ACTIVITY 3C: GROUP ACTIVITY: PRACTICE SHARE

**Estimated Activity Time:** 20 minutes

**Materials:** Breakout Rooms

**Trainee Content:** None

**Slides:** XX-XX

### Description of Activity:

This activity is a small group exploration of ways and tools workers have found useful to explain the legal/case process to parents and their relatives.

### Before the Activity:

- Review PPTs and trainer notes.
- Father co-trainer, prepare some comments about how this process was (or was not) explained to you. Was there anything particularly helpful? Anything you wish you had been told? Share these after you've shared the questions, and before you send them to breakout rooms.

### During the Activity:



Explain that this is time to share their practice experience and any resources or tools they have found useful when explaining the court or case processes to parents or relatives. Send the participants to breakout rooms with 3-4 people. Copy the discussion questions below into the chat. If you are in the classroom, just keep the discussion slide displayed. Give the groups 10 minutes to discuss.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What have you found works when explaining the details of the legal/case process to parents and family members?
2. How do you explain the terminology and process specific to fathers?

Call the groups back to the main room. Ask the trainees to report out if they learned anything that was particularly useful. Remind them there is room in their guide to take notes so they don't forget.

## ACTIVITY 3D: OVERVIEW OF LAW AND CODE

**Estimated Activity Time:** 5 minutes

**Materials:** None

**Trainee Content:** None

**Slides:** XX-XX

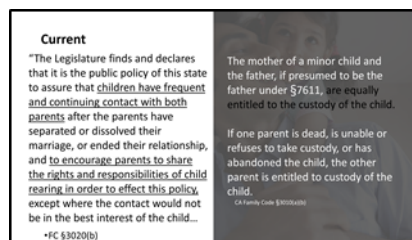
### Description of Activity:

This segment quickly highlights key federal and state mandates regarding family finding and engagement. It also reminds staff of ICWA law and the necessity to both engage fathers and their paternal relatives throughout a child welfare case.

### Before the Activity:

- Become familiar with the terms and mandates regarding father engagement. Review PPTs and trainer notes.

### During the Activity:



California Family Code:

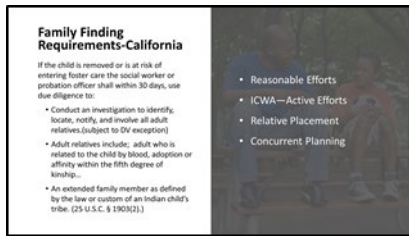
“The Legislature finds and declares that it is the public policy of this state to assure that children have frequent and continuing contact with both parents after the parents have separated or dissolved their marriage, or ended their relationship, and to encourage parents to share the rights and responsibilities of child rearing in order to effect this policy, except where the contact would not be in the best interest of the child...”

FC §3020(b)

The mother of a minor child and the father, if presumed to be the father, are equally entitled to the custody of the child.

If one parent is dead, is unable or refuses to take custody, or has abandoned the child, the other parent is entitled to custody of the child.

CA Family Code §3010(a)(b)



Family Finding and Engagement Requirements in California (see All County Letter 18-42):

If the child is removed or is at risk of entering foster care the social worker or probation officer shall:

- Use due diligence to conduct an investigation to identify, locate and notify all adult relatives both maternal and paternal (subject to DV exception). NOTE: this is not just for placement purposes, but to find and develop permanent connections for the child’s ongoing safety and well-being.
- Due diligence is a proactive approach to identify, locate, notify and involve all adult relatives both maternal and paternal. It’s done within the first 30 days, but also if a change in placement becomes necessary. This is where open-mindedness about fathers and their families is key. Just because they weren’t located or engaged the first or previous time around doesn’t mean you don’t try again.
- Adult relatives include: adult who is related to the child by blood, adoption or affinity within the fifth degree of kinship.
- An extended family member as *defined by the law or custom of an Indian child’s tribe*. This will require you to ask and learn what it means to that child’s Tribe. (25 U.S.C. § 1903(2).)

**Reasonable Efforts**

- Must consider whether non-offending caretaker can provide for & protect child

**Active Efforts in the case of an Indian child**

- Immediately (one working day) notify Tribe if known
- Father and paternal relatives may know ancestry, names for notification, etc. Be persistent. Continue to ask about Native American heritage as new relatives are identified

**Relative placement**

- Paternal relatives must be considered
- If the father of a sibling with custody, he is considered a relative

**Concurrent Planning**

- Fathers and paternal relatives should be considered and involved in CP process



In the case of an Indian child:

“Parent” means any biological parent or parents of an Indian child or any Indian person who has lawfully adopted an Indian child, including adoptions under tribal law or custom.

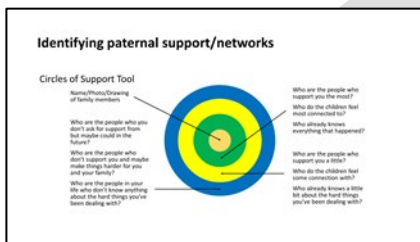
It does not include the unwed father where paternity has not been acknowledged or established.





**Looking for Connection:**

- These requirements for reasonable and active efforts, due diligence, notification, and engagement are not just a technicality. They exist for some of the most powerful and important reasons. They are the way we can do our utmost to provide the children in our care with lifelong safety, permanence, and well-being.
- Andrew Turnell says child abuse is a syndrome of secrecy. When you get more people in the inner circle, you reduce secrecy, and therefore increase safety. We’re going to talk about the Circle of Support in a moment, but these connections are a crucial part of Safety Organization Practice.
- Connecting children and youth with family hopefully provides a permanent home, but even if not, they can still provide lifelong connections and support that allow the child or youth to learn about their heritage and cultural identity, their genetic health history, and precious information about who they are.
- We all want to belong. We all want to be connected. It is worth the hard work to look for that connection and belonging for everyone we work with.
- Don’t forget that connecting fathers and their relatives and Tribe with their children also gives those adults this belonging and connection, too.



One tool that might be useful to both engage with fathers and relatives and conduct some family finding is the Circles of Support Tool. It could be used to identify all supports, not just family. Trainees have a copy of this and the Circles of Support SOP Quick Guide in their Trainee Guide.

Describe the “Circles of Support” tool and the questions asked to guide the process.

- Outer dark blue ring:
  - Who are the people who you don’t ask for support from but maybe could in the future?
  - Who are the people who don’t support you and maybe make things harder for you and your family?
  - Who are the people in your life who don’t know anything about the hard things you’ve been dealing with?
- Next yellow ring:
  - Who are the people who support you a little?
  - Who do the children feel some connection with?
  - Who already knows a little bit about the hard things you’ve been dealing with?
- Center green ring:
  - Who are the people who support you the most?

- Who do the children feel most connected to?
- Who already knows everything that happened?

## Set up the afternoon session:

When we come back from lunch we will spend the afternoon focusing on our personal practice with fathers and their families and tribes as well as the father friendliness of our agencies and organizations. We will revisit our ice breaker from this morning to talk about how our relationships with our fathers or male role models (and other experiences with men and masculinity) may show up in our work with fathers now. Enjoy your lunch.



- Lunch Break: 60 minutes
- Noon – 1pm

## Segment 4: Internal Bias and Practice

### ACTIVITY 4A: SELF-ASSESSMENT AND DISCUSSION

**Estimated Activity Time:** 30 minutes (10 for self-assessment, 20 for discussion)

**Materials:**

**Trainee Content:** [Title] (Page # of the Trainee’s Guide)

**Slides:** 32-40

### Description of Activity:

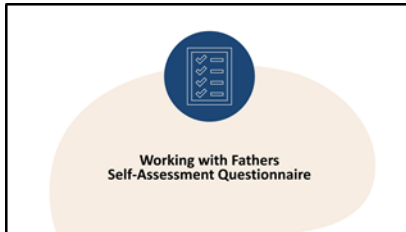
This section gives participants time to reflect on their own practice with fathers, potential biases or blind spots they may have, and in what ways they are also facing barriers to effectively working with fathers in the child welfare system.

### Before the Activity:

- Review PPTs, trainer notes. Think of your experience in working with fathers. Do you have an empowering story about a father in child welfare, maybe someone you had to change your initial

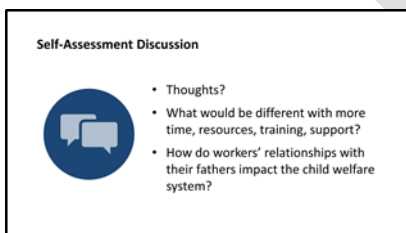
beliefs about? Do you know how your own relationship with your father or male role model impacts your work now?

## During the Activity:



Ask the trainees to complete the *Working with Fathers Self-Assessment* in their Trainee Guide. Remind them that they should be as honest as possible and that they will not be asked to share any of their answers unless they volunteer to do so. During discussion we'll talk about these things from the perspective of how they impact the child welfare system as a whole. The list of questions on this self-assessment are listed below.

1. I have the skills I need to navigate meaningful conversations with fathers and paternal family members. I don't have these skills | I am unsure of my skill level | I have room to grow in this area | I have many of these skills | I am proficient with these skills
2. I strive to provide children with some connection to "non-custodial" fathers even if those fathers are incarcerated. True | False
3. I know which resources and services in my community are father friendly. True | False
4. I tell children whose fathers are not involved in their lives that they should adjust and move on to avoid prolonging their pain. True | False
5. I consistently seek to understand stereotypes and biases that I may have about fathers, men, and masculinity and examine how those effect my work with fathers. True | False
6. I believe that a mother's role and continued presence in a child's life is more important than a father's for the healthy development of their child(ren). True | False
7. I educate the fathers I work with regarding the child welfare system, goals, expectations, and their legal rights. True | False
8. I make it a point to schedule child and family team meetings when both maternal and paternal representatives can attend. True | False
9. List the top three things that limit you from working more effectively with fathers.
10. Think back to the conversation this morning about the important things we learned from our fathers and male role models. How does this relationship influence your current work with fathers?

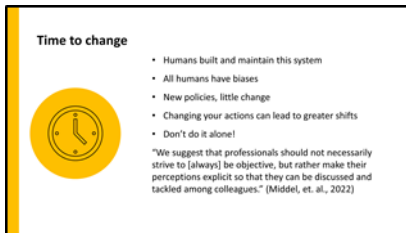


Discussion:

Once the trainees have completed the assessment, facilitate a discussion about the following:

Remind everyone that they do not have to share anything they don't want to, and that we're going to talk about it more generally so don't assume if someone says something that they are talking about themselves during this discussion.

- Does anyone want to share how this activity went or any insights it raised for you?
- What would be different if you had more time, more resources, more training and support?
- How do you think individual workers' relationships with their own fathers or male role models impact the child welfare system as a whole?



Wrap up:

Before going to the next activity, explain to the trainees that sometimes it is possible to forget that the child welfare system is created and enacted by individual human beings. Each of those people has certain experiences, a particular perspective, and their own biases. These biases, when pooled all together, are apparent when we look at father engagement in child welfare. The persistent lack of engagement with fathers has been obvious in data and research for decades even when new policies are introduced. The primary reason it doesn't change is because individuals don't change, we don't expect that something new and different can happen, we get stuck in ruts. Committing to new and different actions and expectations regarding fathers when you go back to work is a chance to use your personal practice to make change. And don't do it alone!

"We suggest that professionals should not necessarily strive to [always] be objective, but rather make their perceptions explicit so that they can be discussed and tackled among colleagues." (Middel, et. al., 2022)

## ACTIVITY 4B: WHAT WE HEAR FROM FATHERS

**Estimated Activity Time:** 30 minutes (10 presentation, 20 discussion)

**Materials:** Breakout rooms

**Trainee Content:** Practice Share Questions

**Slides:** xx-xx

### Description of Activity:

This activity has two parts. The first is a discussion of what fathers have reported directly in qualitative research about what obstacles they experience and some possible practices that might work well for them. The second part is a small group activity where participants can share what they have found works when engaging fathers and/or what they are hoping to try when they return to work after this course. This practice share is intended to highlight and amplify the wisdom and experience in the room.

This activity is ideally presented and facilitated by a father co-trainer who has and can speak to lived experience in the child welfare system. If that's not possible, single trainer should facilitate as usual.

## Before the Activity:

- Agency trainer: become familiar with the referenced studies regarding father engagement, review the PPT and trainer notes. Consider whether you have any relevant practice experiences to share briefly with the group in case they have trouble getting started.
- Father co-trainer: prepare by reviewing the referenced studies, PPT, and trainer notes. Prepare to talk about what was mysterious about the child welfare system when you first encountered it. What assumptions did you have to overcome (other peoples' and/or your own)? Did you experience distrust of your worker and/or the system? What child welfare worker actions were helpful to build trust and/or what do you wish you would have had happen that would have helped.

## During the Activity:



- As we discussed earlier today, many studies show that fathers distrust the system and/or the caseworker – at least initially.
- Caseworker bias is one of the biggest barriers to a father's participation in the case.
- Provide examples of caseworker bias and what it looks like when it shows up: The Caseworker may incorrectly interpret how Dads engage with their children. The case worker may feel that dad's interaction or discipline may be inappropriate or may even feel that the current placement is safer than Dad, when in fact his interaction IS safe and appropriate. Caseworker may be looking for negative things, without even realizing they are not looking for the positive. Frustration may be interpreted as anger. Difficulty understanding details when under stress can be viewed as reluctance or refusal to "cooperate." Fear or overwhelm can be seen as "bad attitude."

A recent study found that

- Fathers report case worker attitude is more important than their skills (Coakley, 2018) "fathers felt social workers' negative attitudes affected their involvement adversely and; social workers' compassionate and respectful attitudes promoted their involvement."
- Feeling comfortable, respected, and valued is an important part of continuing services. "child welfare agencies' climate and practices convey their openness to working with fathers. If fathers do not feel comfortable, respected, or valued in their dealings with the child welfare system, then they may choose not to work with social workers toward permanency"
- This is pretty obvious—we are all this way. If we find ourselves somewhere where folks are treating us with disrespect or where we get that sense of "I don't belong here." We ALL want to walk away and tend to avoid that feeling. It's natural. Sometimes we think we would NEVER do

that if it was our child, but you cannot know how that exclusion or disrespect feels to anyone else. Providing information in a compassionate, respectful way is proven in this study to make a difference in the way fathers feel.

How can you get to that compassionate and respectful attitude?

- Internal dialogue—may require a step back, take a moment and reflect on what is happening during this interaction with Dad. How am I feeling? Am I scared? Am I in a hurry? Did I already determine what “label” I have provided for Dad? Am I looking for the negative?
- External dialogue—how are you speaking to him? Are you sure he understands or are you moving too quickly? Is he responding or shutting down? Are you curious about his strengths and what he needs? Do you know how he sees himself with his children in the future? Are you speaking with him accordingly?

## ACTIVITY 4C: PERSONAL PRACTICE ACTION PLAN

**Estimated Activity Time:** 30 minutes (5 presentation of activity, 25 minutes on Action Plan)

**Materials:** Breakout rooms (one for each attendee)

**Trainee Content:** Action Plan instructions and form

**Slides:** XX-XX

### Description of Activity:

This activity is a quick self-reflection for the trainees to think about the elements of child welfare practice that they are responsible for, and how they can change or modify elements of their own personal practice to be more inclusive of fathers and to increase the consistency of their contact and interaction with fathers. They will create a simple action plan of steps to take when they return to work.

### Before the Activity:

- Review the action plan instructions below.

### During the Activity:



Introduce the action plan by asking them to find their copy in their Trainee Guides.

Send them to individual breakout rooms (just select enough breakout rooms for 1 attendee per room).

This way, they can call you to their room if they need to ask you questions privately and you can send broadcast messages to all of them as their time in the activity passes and alert them when you are about to bring them back. In an in-person classroom, they will work at their tables.

Trainees will follow the instructions for developing their Action Plan that are in the trainee guide (they are also below). Feel free to review them quickly before they begin.

#### Trainee Instructions:

Now you will develop an Action Plan to address the items in your Self-Assessment. This is a process you can use to be both practical and extravagant. What do you need that you can likely get, and what do you need to do your job the very best you can? Things that seem “impossible” or “impractical” can go in the “Big Dreams” section at the bottom of the plan. They may not fit in a timeline right now, but they are still important and your unique inspiration, so don’t leave them out! No one else needs to see this plan, so use it to focus your own personal approach to working with fathers.

There are five areas of this personal Action Plan we will add Leadership later on:

#### **Skills**

First, look back to your answer to the first question on your Working with Fathers Self-Assessment Questionnaire (the choices were: I don’t have these skills | I am unsure of my skill level | I have room to grow in this area | I have many of these skills | I am proficient with these skills). You might consider using this as a starting place for your action plan:

- If you don’t have these skills, are unsure of your skill level, or have room to grow: you might develop your action plan around getting training and support from your supervisor and others to expand your skills. You might plan to seek out additional training opportunities or mentorship.
- If you have many of these skills or are already proficient: you might build your action plan around helping others and sharing your knowledge about father friendly resources and practice elements that work for you—with your colleagues, your supervisor, training staff, external stakeholders, etc. You might think of ways you can get fathers with lived experience more integrated at your agency.

#### **Resources**

Then, move on to the other questions and see if there is anything there that needs more attention, resources, or support. For example, do you need more information about how to explain the court process to fathers? Do you need to find more father-friendly resources in your community? Write down a few steps you can take to address these areas. Give yourself a tight timeline for these activities, you are so busy it is easy to allow this work to move to the back burner if you aren’t diligent.

#### **Ongoing**

Finally, write a few ongoing goals. For example, plan to regularly bring up your work with fathers in supervision. Ask your supervisor for more support if you need it, make sure they are keeping track with you of needed improvements. And/or commit to ongoing learning and skill development regarding racial, ethnic, and gender disparities in child welfare and how case worker bias affects father involvement.

#### **Support**

It’s very important that you do not have to do this alone. On the right side of each of these areas, write down a few people who you think might be able to support your practice change with fathers. In particular, who can help you address the items you listed as your top three limits to working more effectively with fathers?

#### **Big Dreams**

This is where you put the stuff that seems impractical or out there right now. It is important to keep these big ideas in our plans because while it may seem impossible now, as things change it might begin to seem more realistic. Also, this is where you put the goals for why you are making any of these changes at all. For example: So that all willing fathers are connected with their kids. Or, No children experience abuse. Or whatever your big dreams are.

After they have worked on their Action Plans for 20 minutes, call them all back to the main room. Ask them to raise their hands—Does anyone feel like they have concrete steps they can take when they get back to work tomorrow? You don't have to say what they are, just do you have them? Important note: Don't do a full report-out here. These Action Plans are their own personal process. You're just trying to hear if that process resulted in concrete steps or not. Then, send them to break.

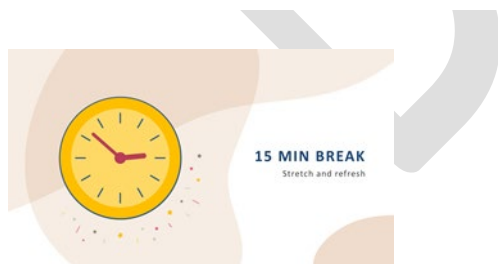
This is what the Action Plan looks like in their Guide.

### Working with Fathers Action Plan

Improving or expanding my skills		
Actions	By when	With whom
Improving or expanding my resources and support		
Actions	By when	With whom

### Working with Fathers Action Plan

Ongoing plans
Big Dreams
Leadership activities



15 minute break

## Transition to the Next Segment:

Move on to Segment 5: Agency Assessment and Leadership



# Segment 5: Agency Assessment and Leadership

## ACTIVITY 5A: AGENCY ASSESSMENT

**Estimated Activity Time:** 20 minutes

**Materials:**

**Trainee Content:** Father-Friendliness Questionnaire

**Slides:** 42-59

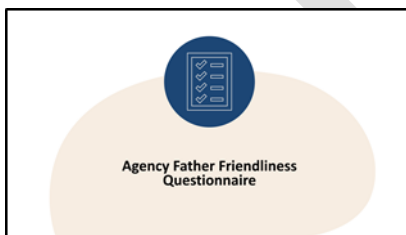
### Description of Activity:

This segment allows trainees to spend some time thinking about how accessible and welcoming their agency is to fathers and their families. We will look at a sample of items from an assessment tool used to identify how “father friendly” the trainee’s organizations are—where they are doing well, and in what ways they need improvement.

### Before the Activity:

- Review the Agency Father-Friendliness Questionnaire

### During the Activity:



Instruct the trainees to find the Agency Father-Friendliness Questionnaire in their guides. Give them 10 minutes to work on the Questionnaire (yes/no questions below, discussion questions in report out.)

1. Does your agency’s public restroom have a changing table in the men’s room or a gender-neutral family bathroom? Yes | No
2. Is the quality and consistency of father engagement routinely part of staff performance evaluation? Yes | No
3. Do your outreach materials (brochures, lobby posters, website, etc.) depict fathers? Yes | No
4. Are all your forms formatted in such a way that either a father or mother could fill them out? Yes | No
5. Have you been trained how to communicate with and involve fathers who are incarcerated? Yes | No
6. Are you and your co-workers formally prepared (i.e., trained, provided written materials, etc.) to explain father-specific aspects of the child welfare system and court processes? Yes | No

7. Does your agency keep an updated list of father-friendly resources (organizations, services, support groups, etc.) for your community? Yes | No
8. Have you been trained to talk with mothers about the importance of father-child relationships? Yes | No
9. Is it your agency's policy to contact both parents when the need for decisions arises? Yes | No
10. Are there toys and books that feature fathers and children in your family visitation or waiting room space? Yes | No

Facilitate a quick 10-minute discussion about the final two questions on the questionnaire:

- Have you seen any leaders in father friendliness at your agency or elsewhere? How could you tell they were leaders?
- What practices or policies have you seen in child welfare or community agencies that seems to work well for fathers or help you successfully work with fathers?

Keep a list of effective practices to share with the participants.

## ACTIVITY 5B: BEYOND INVITATION DISCUSSION

**Estimated Activity Time:** 40 minutes

**Materials:**

**Trainee Content:** Action Plan

**Slides:** 60-63

### Description of Activity:

The trainees participate in small group discussions about how their agency/organization and the child welfare system in general can go beyond simply “inviting” fathers and move into a practice of welcoming, supporting, and embracing fathers’ involvement and presence.

### Before the Activity:

- Both trainers: Review PPTs, trainer notes.
- Non-father trainer: consider your own employment history to find examples of organizations or agencies that welcomed fathers as part of their organizational culture, and/or of places where you knew you were welcome and how you knew that.
- Father co-trainers, consider your experiences and if you ever felt an organizational culture that welcomed you as a father. If you haven’t experienced that such a culture, how do you think it could be made?

## During the Activity:

### Beyond Invitation

- How can agencies cultivate a culture that values the involvement of fathers, that makes them feel as though they belong there?
- How can we move beyond just inviting fathers?

While we are only required to locate and invite fathers to participate in their child’s case in the child welfare system. Our true goal and purpose is to go beyond just checking the “invited” box, and to create avenues for full participation, demonstrate that we honor his voice and opinions, share decision-making with him and/or his relatives and tribe.

- How can agencies cultivate a culture that values the involvement of fathers, that makes them feel as though they belong there?
- How can we move beyond just inviting fathers into a practice that welcomes, supports, and embraces their involvement?

### SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION:

15 minutes: Send the participants into small groups of 4 or 5 to talk about how child welfare organizations can move beyond just “inviting” fathers to be involved in case planning, meetings, visitation, etc. Think about policies, the physical environment, staffing. Instruct them to select a note taker who will create a list of things that the child welfare system is already doing well (strengths) and a list of things that the system needs to change regarding working successfully with fathers.

TRAINER NOTE: Make it clear that no one is to talk about their own particular agency in a disparaging way, but rather focus the conversation on child welfare organizations/agencies in general.

### REPORT OUT:

15 minutes: Repeat that no one is to talk about their own agency’s details, but rather focus the conversation on strengths and the child welfare organizations/agencies in general.

Make a master list of strengths and potential improvements.

One item for the list that trainees may not think of, and is backed by research (and the presence of your father co-trainer if you have one) is: “Workforce development activities involving those with lived experience as mentors and instructors may be beneficial” (Middel, et. al. 2022)

### ACTION PLAN:

10 minutes: Each trainee will spend some time adding to the Leadership section of their Action Plan.

Trainer: We are all leaders no matter what position we hold at work. How will you lead your co-workers and agency into a deeper practice of working with fathers that goes beyond simple invitation?

For example: will you commit to bring up the topic of fathers and their involvement in meetings? Will you ask your coworkers for their advice about how to work more effectively with fathers? Will you notice and bring to others’ attention that your agency may not be physically welcoming to fathers in some way? Commit to 3-5 actions that you will take to lead your agency into a more father-friendly future. Don’t forget to include some of your big dreams about leadership at this time as well!

## Segment 6: Wrap up and Evaluation

### ACTIVITY 6A: WRAP UP

**Estimated Activity Time:** 10 minutes

**Materials:** [List of materials, if any].

**Trainee Content:** Ensuring Fathers are on Equal Ground; Mattering (Page # of the Trainee's Guide).

**Slides:** 64-70

#### Description of Activity:

This segment allows the trainer to wrap up the day by highlighting a few key points for trainees to take back to work with them. This segment is also when trainees will complete the post-course evaluation and the satisfaction survey.

#### During the Activity:

- Thank students for their hard work and willingness to think creatively and share their experience and knowledge in the training today.

### ACTIVITY 6B: POST-COURSE EVALUATION AND SATISFACTION SURVEY

**Estimated Segment Time:** 35 minutes.

**Materials:** Evaluation Guide.

**Trainee Content:** N/A.

**Slides:** xx.

#### Description of the activity

The trainer will direct trainees to complete the evaluation(s) to receive completion status for the course.

All evaluation materials for trainers and trainees should be accessed through [the California Child Welfare Training \(CACWT\) system website](https://cacwt.dss.ca.gov/), which is hosted at the following URL:

<https://cacwt.dss.ca.gov/>. Please make sure to follow the evaluation instructions located in the latest version of the Evaluation Guide which is included in the trainer materials section in CACWT.

#### Before the activity

Read through, from beginning to end, the instructions related to this training located in the latest version of the Evaluation Guide.

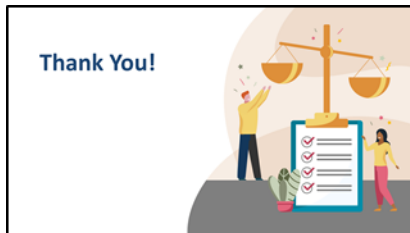
## During the activity

### Post-Course Evaluation and Satisfaction Survey

In order to receive course completion status, trainees will complete all evaluations through the [California Child Welfare Training \(CACWT\) Statewide Learning Management System](#).

On your browser, navigate to:  
<https://cacwt.dss.ca.gov>  
and log in using your username and password.

Display Slide x, Post-Course Evaluation and Satisfaction Survey.



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# Materials Checklist

Trainer Guide

Trainee Guide

PowerPoint Presentation

Father Co-Trainer Guide (Optional) [this will be created post-vetting by pulling and organizing all content related to co-trainer tasks from this guide]

In-Person Training:

- Nametags
- Chart paper or white board and markers
- Post-its or notepaper
- Pens

## OPTIONAL HANDOUTS:

- PowerPoint Slides Printout for Trainees
- Finding Your Way: Guides for Fathers in Child Protection Cases
- The Father Friendliness Organizational Self-Assessment for Public Child Welfare in the CalSWEC toolkit

## References

**\*\*these references will be further updated and formatted during post-vetting revision**

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- Fung, Nickie, Jennifer Bellamy, Eliza Abendroth, Diletta Mittone, Roseana Bess, and Matthew Stagner (2021). *A Seat at the Table: Piloting continuous learning to engage fathers and parental relatives in child welfare*. OPRE Report #2021-62, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [www.acf.hhs.gov/opre](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre)
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- Administration for Children and Families, Informational Memorandum; (2018) *Integrating Approaches that Prioritize and Enhance Father Engagement*. [ACF-ACF-IM-18-01](https://www.acf-hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2018/07/acf-im-18-01.pdf)
- Lawrence, Shonda K (2013). *President Obama and the Fatherhood Initiative*. Jackson State University. Race, Gender and Class. Volume 20; Numbers 3-4, 2013 (98-113). [www.rgc.uno.edu](http://www.rgc.uno.edu)

Middel, Floor, Lopez, Monica, Fluke, John, and Grietens, Hans (2022) Racial/ethnic and gender disparities in child protection decision-making: What role do stereotypes play? *Child Abuse & Neglect* 127.

## **TABLE OF CALIFORNIA STATUTES AND RULES OF COURT**

### **CALIFORNIA CODES**

#### Welfare and Institutions Code

§316.2, §290.1(a)(2), §309(e)(1) and §628(d), §319(d)(1)(f)(1)

#### Family Code

§7540, §7541, §7572, §3020(b), §3010(a)(b)

### **CALIFORNIA RULES OF COURT**

Rule: 5.637(a)(b); 5.676

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